



## NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Early Childhood Professionals Conversations on B-5 Strategic Plan April 2019

The NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Initiative (“Pathways”) requests proposals from local organizations to gather input from local early childhood professionals on North Carolina’s B-5 Strategic plan, as part of the Preschool Development Grant.

Grantees will host one meeting with early childhood professionals to gather input, to occur in September or October 2019. Selected grantees will be reimbursed for costs associated with the meeting (e.g., food, location, participant stipends, etc.) up to \$2,000. **Proposals are due May 10<sup>th</sup>.**

Pathways would like to partner with communities across NC to make sure all voices are heard at the state level. If applicants have questions or concerns about meeting the requirements of the grant, please reach out to us Kate Irish at kirish77@gmail.com for a conversation.

### Background on the Pathways Initiative

The Pathways vision is that *all North Carolina children, regardless of race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status, are reading on grade-level by the end of third grade, so that they have the greatest opportunity for life success.*

Pathways recognizes that literacy is rooted in birth-through-age-eight child development, and includes:

- Health and Development on Track Beginning at Birth,
- Supported and Supportive Families and Communities, and
- High Quality Birth-through-Age-Eight Learning Environments, with Regular Attendance

Pathways brings diverse state and local stakeholders and leaders together, across health, family support, and early learning and education disciplines; across government, policy, private sector and nonprofit actors; across birth-through-age-



five and kindergarten-through-third-grade systems; and across political identities.

These stakeholders have co-created a **common vision, shared measures of success** and **coordinated strategies** that support children’s optimal development beginning at birth. The [Pathways Measures of Success Framework](#) outlines 50-60 birth-through-age-eight measures that research shows influence early literacy and young child and family well-being.

The [NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Action Framework](#) lays out a series of expectations for the state’s child and family serving systems and actions to support children’s social-emotional health, ensure high quality birth-through-age-eight early learning environments, and create the conditions for every child to be in school every day. The Framework uses a racial equity lens, is grounded in family and is informed by community input.

The Pathways process, frameworks and associated metrics have been foundational in setting the strategic direction for a comprehensive early childhood system in North Carolina. In February 2019, the NC Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) and NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) released the [NC Early Childhood Action Plan](#) (ECAP) which was based on the Pathways Measures of Success and incorporates many of the actions from the Pathways Action Framework.

### **Pathways and the Preschool Development Grant**

The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) was awarded funding through the federal Preschool Development Grant Birth-Five (PDG) for activities to strengthen its early childhood system. The PDG requires states to develop a B-5 strategic plan to improve the quality and access of services for children and families across programs through coordination and collaboration among state and local agencies, early childhood partners, and stakeholders. The PDG provides an opportunity for NC to develop its B-5 strategic plan to ensure the state’s early childhood system best meets the needs of young children, particularly the most vulnerable, and their families.

NC’s Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP) will inform the development of the state’s B-5 strategic plan. The B-5 strategic plan is being developed by staff from DHHS, using data, analysis and community engagement work from Pathways and other state-level partners, including the North Carolina Partnership for Children/Smart Start.

With this proposal, Pathways seeks to **partner with local organizations to host conversations among early childhood professionals to inform the final B-5 strategic plan and implementation of the Pathways Action Framework.**

## **Proposal Requirements and Instructions**

The following three sections contain project requirements and instructions, to inform and assist in the completion of applications:

1. Participate in pre-meeting planning and training;
2. Host and facilitate one meeting, with attention to diverse representation of early childhood professionals and service agency representatives; and
3. Project deliverables including participant evaluation forms and brief community input report.

### **Participate in pre-meeting planning and training**

Pathways will support grantees in facilitating conversations with early childhood professionals and collecting and analyzing the stakeholder input by providing facilitation and meeting materials, note taking tool and input report template and technical assistance. Grantees will identify a facilitator and a note-taker from the organization who will participate in a pre-meeting webinar. The pre-meeting webinar will familiarize facilitators and note-takers with the facilitation guide, including tools and templates they will use to coordinate and lead the meetings and elicit and record participant feedback.

The pre-meeting webinar will be held on August 22nd.

Note: Grantees are required to ensure two people (one facilitator and one note-taker) participate in the pre-meeting webinar.

### **Host and facilitate Early Childhood Professionals Conversation**

#### *Targeted Participants*

Grantees will host one meeting with local partners, with a focus on diverse representation among invited participants, particularly people of color. To every extent possible, meetings should include representation from:

- Early educators and administrators of early education services for children ages birth through five.
- Teachers and principals working with kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- Providers of other early childhood services for children ages birth-through-age-eight, including:
  - Pediatricians
  - Home visiting services providers
  - Early intervention services providers
- A representative from the Smart Start local partnership
- A representative from the Local Education Agency
- A representative from the County Department of Social Services
- A representative from the County Department of Public Health
- A representative from the Local Management Entity (LME)

Note: A separate RFP is being released as part of this project to collect family input through local agencies serving families to ensure parent input is also captured.

**Meeting:**

Grantees will facilitate a meeting to collect input from early childhood professionals that will inform the B-5 Strategic Plan and begin moving NC towards implementation of the strategic plan, the Early Childhood Action Plan and the Pathways Action Framework.

Grantees are responsible for:

- Meeting logistics (including, but not limited to, food, location, participant stipends, etc.),
- Ensuring representation from the groups highlighted above,
- Facilitating the meeting, using Pathways-provided agenda and activities,
- Taking detailed notes, using a template provided by Pathways,
- Ensuring participants complete an evaluation form (available in electronic or paper format) provided by Pathways,
- Completing an Input Report template, and
- Submitting the report to Pathways by October 31st.

*Surveys*

Throughout the grant period, Pathways may ask grantees to share electronic surveys with the local partners invited to your meeting. Grantees agree to forward e-surveys by agreed upon deadlines.

Note: If applicants have concerns about technology capacity of the organization (ex. broadband connectivity) we will work with grantee on alternate strategies.

**Project Deliverables, due on the timeline below:**

- Input Report, including copy of completed notes template.
- Participant Evaluation Forms completed electronically and submitted.

*Timeline*

- Pathways circulates RFP – April 18, 2019
- **Proposals due – May 10, 2019**
- Proposals selected – May 20, 2019
- Webinar – August 22, 2019
- Host Meeting with Early Childhood Professionals – September-October 2019
- **Deliverables Due – Oct 31, 2019 - Input Report and Evaluation Forms**

**Submission Details:**

When completed, please return your signed application to Anna Yonk at [anna.yonk@compasseval.com](mailto:anna.yonk@compasseval.com). Please direct any questions to Kate Irish at [kirish77@gmail.com](mailto:kirish77@gmail.com).

# Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Early Childhood Professionals Conversation Application

Please email this form by May 10 to [anna.yonk@compasseval.com](mailto:anna.yonk@compasseval.com)

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Executive Director \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Project Leader(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Facilitator Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Facilitator Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Note-taker Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Note-taker Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Please answer the following questions (1-2 pages):**

1. Please provide a brief overview of your relationships with the local stakeholders included in the Scope of Work. How have you worked together in the past or how are you hoping to work with them going forward?
2. What individuals will you reach out to for each of the categories of local stakeholders listed? How will you get them to the conversation? Please discuss any strategies you believe are necessary to ensure diverse representation from the targeted participants, including any necessary supports for meeting attendees who may experience barriers to participation.
3. Please discuss your organization's capacity to host a meeting with local partners, including a pre-meeting training webinar, meeting facilitation, taking detailed notes, and submitting a clear (brief) report that summarizes the feedback gathered.

**Deliverables**

Please sign this agreement to indicate that you understand and will comply with the requested deliverables.

I understand that, on the timeline described in the attached RFP, I will provide the following deliverables:

- Application Signed by Executive Director
- Input Report, including a copy of completed note templates
- Participant Evaluation Forms
- Invoice for reimbursement

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_